Pollution of Rivers

277. SHRI J.P. GOYAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that water of all rivers in the country has becom; polluted and germs of serious diseases of lungs and skin are found in these rivers ;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the ashes of dead bodies and thousands of unburnt dead bodies are thrown into the rivers and the waste of industries is also released into the rivers;

(c) whether any steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to check such practice;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(e) if the reply to part (c) above be in the negative, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI) : (a) Stretches of many rivers are highly polluted. Use of polluted water often gives rise to water-borne diseases like typhoid dysentery etc. It is difficult to correlate lung and skin diseases directly with the pollution.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The steps taken by the Government to prevent and control pollution of rivers in the country include the following :

(i) Creation of public awareness;

^(ii) Construction of Electric Crematoria;

(iii) Zoning and classification of river stretchers for designated uses ;

(iv) Formulation of Minimum National Standards for various polluting industries and their phased implementation by Central and State Pollution Control Boards ;

(v) Persuading industries to adopt pollution control measures ;

(vi) Legal action against defaulting industries ;

(vii) Financial incentives for installation and satisfac tory performance of polu-tion control equip-ment;

(viii) Encouragement for installation of common effluent treatment plants particularly for the small-scale industries; and

(ix) Formulation of basin-wise pollution control programmes such as the Ganga Action Plan .

(e) Does not arise.

Effect of price hike on people living beiow Poverty Line

378. SHRI J.P. GOYAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent price hike in almost all the essential commodities has effected the people living below the poverty line or who had been raised from the poverty line ;

(b) whether due to this price escalation the poverty line has changed.

(c) if so, the details thereof ; and

(d) what is the number of persons living below the poverty line as a result of all round rise in prices and what steps are contemplated for their upliftment.